

REMARKS

Claims 1, 11 and 20 have been amended without prejudice.

The Office rejected claims 1-20 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Lilly et al (US2004/0039466). Accordingly, the independent claims 1, 11, and 20 have been amended to include that the nodes communicate with each other over the transmission line as well as through a plurality of inductive couplers, using burst modulation techniques. Lilly does not teach or suggest using burst modulation techniques with inductive couplers. The applicants feel that the structure of now amended claim 1 is significantly different from the wireline system disclosed by Lilly, since transmitting data through a plurality of inductive couplers would affect burst modulation techniques differently than through a wireline, such as reduced bandwidth, increased attenuation, and increase interference.

In view of the amendments and arguments made herein, Applicants respectfully submit that the application is now in condition for allowance. Accordingly, the Applicants respectfully request that a timely Notice of Allowance be issued in this case.

The Applicants believe that there are no other fees due at this time; however, the Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any fees which may be required at any time during the prosecution of this application without specific authorization, or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account 180584. If there are any questions concerning the above, please contact the undersigned at (281) 878-5658.

Respectfully submitted,

/Jeffery E. Daly/

Electronically signed by Jeffery E. Daly on 12/14/2006

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12/14/06 *Jeffery E. Daly*
Date Electronic Signature